United Nations S/2003/81

Security Council

Distr.: General
23 January 2003

Original: English

Letter dated 21 January 2003 from the Permanent Representative of Greece to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to draw your attention to the statement on the formation of the Council of Ministers of Bosnia and Herzegovina issued by the Presidency of the European Union on 16 January 2003 (see annex).

I would be grateful if the text of this letter and its annex could be circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Adamantios Th. **Vassilakis**
Permanent Representative of Greece to the United Nations

03-22079 (E) 240103

Annex to the letter dated 21 January 2003 from the Permanent Representative of Greece to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

[Original: English, French and Spanish]

Statement on the formation of the Council of Ministers of Bosnia and Herzegovina issued by the Presidency of the European Union on 16 January 2003

The European Union welcomes the formation of the Council of Ministers of Bosnia and Herzegovina and congratulates its newly appointed members.

The fact that the term of office of the elected officials will be extended to four years, from the present two, under the terms of the election law, gives the new Government the opportunity to pursue a significantly more ambitious and practical policy agenda.

The European Union would like to reiterate its readiness to work closely with the new State Government, which should be genuinely committed to the quality and intensity of the reform process that Bosnia and Herzegovina needs in order to move closer to the European Union.

The European Union will continue to be strongly committed to the European future of Bosnia and Herzegovina. In this context, a feasibility study by the European Commission will be the next step. It has to be clear, however, that the ultimate responsibility for progress on this path to Europe lies with the State and entity authorities.

The European Union urges the members of the new State Government to work jointly, rapidly and intently on carrying out all the necessary Stabilization and Association Process reforms in order for Bosnia and Herzegovina to move from stabilization to association. To this end, Bosnia and Herzegovina has to speed up efforts to adopt European standards for the rule of law, the functioning of State institutions, the fight against organized crime, the sustainable return of refugees and internally displaced persons, full cooperation with the International Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia and the establishment of State-level civilian command and control over the armed forces.

The European Union hopes that the formation of entity governments will soon follow.